

BOOKS Printed for *Tho. Ballard* at the
Rising Sun in *Little Britain*.

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surest, and safest means, for Arts Triumph
over Natures Infirmities. Being a full and free
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concealed by all Artifts, and only discoverable by
Fire. With an Appendix concerning the Nature,
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Rectification and Exaltation of *Vinous* Spirits, Tin-
ctures, Oyls, Salts, Powers, Oleosums; in such
a Method as to retain the specifick Vertue of
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Treated of by *Cartes*, *Starkey*, *Sylvius*, *Glauber*,
Helmont, *Paracelsus* and others, are explicated af-
ter a more particuler and exact manner then here-
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Phospheros.

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Trifertes Sagan,

O R.

- 1033. d 19

Immortal Dissolvent.²

BEING

A Brief but Candid Discourse of the Matter and Manner of preparing the *Liquor Alkabeft* of *Helmont*, the great *Hilech* of *Paracelsus*, the *Sal Circulatum Minus* of *Ludovicus de Comit* : or our Fiery Spirit of the Four Elements.

TOGETHER

With its Use in Preparing Magifteries, Arcana's Quinteffences, and other fecret Medicines of the *Adepts*. from the Animal, Vegetable or Mineral Kingdom.

By *Cleidophorus Myftagogus*.

2. Maccab. ch. 1. v. 19. to the 23. The Fire of the Altar turned into thick Water.
2. Efdr: ch. 14. v. 39. And behold he reached me a full Cup, which was full as it were with Water, but the Colour was like Fire.

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A N
E P I S T L E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

Various have been the Opinions (Courteous Reader) concerning the Basis and Foundation of this general Dissolvent, commonly known by the name of the Liquor Alkahest; some Imagining it to be Mercury Prepared; others, that 'tis in Urine, Blood and the like; which has been the reason of so many and difficult Labours made use of, and all in vain: for that the Liquor remaines at this day as great a Secret in the World as ever, and 'tis like so to Continue, while Chymical Authors deliver the Subject in such Tropes and Metaphors, which horrible and Inextricable Labyrinth the young Tyro's are so entangled in, that it must be by more than an ordinary Providence, that he can be disentangled and set free.

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On this Account it may be properly said, that these Chymical Writers had as good to have been silent; nay 'twou'd have been better; for then so many would not have engaged in a search, where so little likelihood of obtaining was seen whereby a great deal of Precious Time and Money might have been saved, and that Perplexity of mind which follows vain Chymical Processes might have been Prevented; for this Reason it is but just in Authors in all their discourses, tending to the Instruction of others, to direct to that Subject which is the true Object of that discourse; and tho' I must acknowledge that 'tis not fit to be delivered or disclosed so plainly, as that every Hog may come to the Honey Pot, yet I say that it might be Cloath'd with such a decent habit, as to preserve it Abstruse enough, yet by this a certain and harmonious Concord to be seen; as for Example, the Object of this discourse is the Alkahest; Man and all Creatures have it, for there is no Being in Nature, that is rightly and genuinely dissolved, but what may properly and truly be said to be done by this Liquor; but particularly in Man after a more evident manner in all Chylifications whatever, but in this Act Man sucks the Quintessence of all things so dissolved for his own Nutrition, and being Transmuted into Human Species, the Recrements are cast off by
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to the Reader.

the common Emunctories, far more grosse and Imperfect, than the Species themselves were in their first Reception, consequently they are no fit object to ground the discourse of so pure and Immortal a dissolvent on; nor indeed Man himself, tho' we grant, that it is plentifully in him, but 'tis that Salt or Life in him which Concentrates all other Salts in his own Essence, as a Catholick Fountain for all the Rivulets to be supplied from: so that there is no taking of it from him but by a violent breaking of the Glass and a Transplanting of the Fountain back again to that Inexhaustible Ocean from whence it first received its being, therefore Man can't be the Object of any discourse, appertaining to demonstrate the Subject of this Dissolvent; for the pure in him, as all ready said, cannot be obtained without Death, which is abominable, even to think on; but if it were obtain'd it would not answer the end; for what is sufficient to dissolve in the Vegetable Kingdom is too weak for the Animal; and that which is strong enough in the Animal is too weak for Minerals; therefore seek it in that and from that, which is the Fountain, that supplies all Creatures and beings with it; for had it not a Source, Nature would soon cease, for as she exhausteth by the Acts of motion and Agitation of Parts

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in Generation, so is she on the other hand Immediately Supplied, not only in the Great World, but also in every Individual Part where Life is; Receiving the same through the Air, as the true Vehicle, consequently this Catholick Fountain is the Right object to ground this discourse on, as the true Subject of the said dissolving Liquor; this is a standing Truth, 'twas Truth in the beginning, and will remain so to the end of Time: the Reason and Philosophy of it I can by Mechanical Demonstration make clear to a Person worthy of such Inspection: therefore throwing by all Clouds, Dark Vails and Metaphors, I genuinely declare, that the matter of this Dissolvent is one and the same in Essence with that Matter from whence all the wise Antients obtained the Universal Medicine one being the Work of Art, the other Nature; one gentle, the other violent: so that by the difference of Operation they are brought to different Effects.

Now therefore the Subject of this discourse being the Liquor Alkahest, the Object must be the Universal Spirit; for 'tis from this grand Fountain of Nature that our Chaos doth proceed; therefore thrice happy is he, that knows those Magnets, that Attract and make a species of this general Genus:
for

to the Reader.

for be assured that there is something more than Elements in all Created Beings; even an Incorruptible and Quintessential Spirit, which is the very Life of the Elements themselves; which being taken appears in Mist, Vapor or Water, even that out of which the Antients say all things were Generated: but the right Knowledge of this Matter is sufficiently abstruse, and the Operation thereon yet more abstruse; for I with many others know by experience, that the Matter may be known and many doe know it, yet are wholly to seek in the matter and Modus of Operating thereon; and what ever some Foppish Conceited ones may think, viz. that if they had the Knowledge of the true matter all difficulty is over; this may prove a grand Mistake; for I have been Intimately Acquainted with some, that have had a true knowledge of the matter, and have wrought thereon; yet to the day of their death have been to seek of the Magistery.

These Difficulties have been those sharp Stones, that have hinder'd my Legal Progression in Twenty Years Travels towards the Mount Helicon of Art; so that my Labour of Body has been excessive, and that of the mind much more; I have passed through the drought and Scorching heat of the Day, and also

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through the cold and Chilling Frosts of the Night through a Multitude of wants and difficulties, even often to the hazard of Life it self; how easy soever such, as aforesaid, may think it: I have had no other door to come in at, but hard Labour, and great Expence, for Coals and Glasses have been my Interpreters, and shall be so to every true Son of Art to the end of time; so that for Conscience-sake I'll write the Truth, as well knowing, that there are already too many Sophistical and false Processes in the world, which will not bear the Touch-stone of Experience; but vanishes like a Reprobate Metal upon the Test;

But passing by all this, and much more that might be said of the like Nature; I shall now address my self to the desirers of Wisdom, and let them know, that I have, as in a Glass, shewed them the true matter, as also the true manner, from which and by which this Dissolvent is to be obtained; I shall now come to speak concerning its Use, and Utility when obtain'd which will abundantly reward the Possessor for all his Costs and Paines bestowed about it; for as it hath been deliver'd, that the Subject of this Menstruum is Universal, so are the Acts of it the same when prepared, which plainly demonstrates from what Fountain it must flow.

This

to the Reader.

This Liquor, as an Universal Fire, dissolves and opens the Textures of all Beings, in the Vegetable Animal and Mineral Kingdoms, into their next nearest Matter, which is Saline, Sulphureous, Aqueous, and Potable, diffusive in any Liquor, and so comes Immediately to Natures Relief, and by the Specifick Virtue manifested from Power into Act, Diseases, tho' never so deplorable, may be overcome and Cut down, as Grass or Weeds with a Scythe in the hand of a Mower; especially by those of the Mineral Kingdom, which may be justly esteemed the Physicians Crown and Philosophers Diadem: This is the Liquors Virtue in General: but in Particular, as it Universally Acts without Limitation on all Subjects in the World, so in this Action there is something remarkable to be observed in every Subject; for it Fixes Volatile Spirits, and Volatizes Fixed ones; it makes Salts Sulphureous, and Sulphurs Saline; nay it Macerates the Gummosities of Resinous and Gummy things, which the Ferment of our Stomacks could never do; for it being distilled from Amber and Turpentine leaves them in a Salt of excellent Virtue: from the latter I have observed it almost as sweet as Honey, and a powerful Specifick in the Stone; therefore by the help of this Liquor or Fire a few Medicines being

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prepared will Answer in deplorable Cases all that the Patient can hope for, and the true Physician expect to Perform: for Instance Turpentine, so dissolved, or the Stone Ludus, Infallibly Cures the Stone in the Bladder; Amber and Hellebore Hysteric Fits, Hypochondriack Melancholy and Madnes; Cinamon Unicorn's horn and the Liver of an Eel, for the speedy delivery of Women in Childbirth; the Sulphur of Venus is an Universal Nephenthes, without Opium, in all diseases: the Lilly of Antimony for Dropsies and all Agues; the Magistery of Gold for Malignant Fevers, Pestilential, Palsies and Plagues: as also the glorified Sulphur of the Metallus Masculus, by Paracelsus called Vinum Vitæ and Membrorum Essentia, which also cures Consumptions, fixt Mercury or the Arcanum Coralinum and Horizontal Gold in Leprosies, Gout, Palsy, Epilepsy, Cancers Wolves, Scorbute, Kings evil, all Sorts of the Venereal Disease without Salivation or detaining the Patient from business: 'twould be too long to enumerate all those Medicines prepared by this Fire or Liquor; therefore let these Suffice, and the reward that may accrew here from, because by this way of Practise, the Physitian may justly and Conscientiously gain honour and Riches; and the Patients be freed from all those cruel Bar-

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to the Reader.

barities, which are the Adœquate Parts of Common Practise; as if the Pain and Terror of Death were not enough, but there must be an additional Cruelty viz. of Blistering, which to some may exceed the former.

Thus having given you a short Scheme of the Rise, Preparation and Use of this Liquor, I shall Conclude this Preface in Consideration of a Person rightly qualified for the Possession hereof: the first and most necessary Qualification is to be rightly Informed in Religious things so as to know God for themselves savingly, by passing through the Holy River of Regeneration, for to walk in the newness of the Spirit, which Divine gift of the Holy Ghost enables every true Christian to walk with that Circumspection, as to be acceptable in the sight of God, to such it is a sure Guide and safe Conductor in this World towards the desired Haven of rest; it is also to them a mouth and Wisdom, and that by which their Tongues are Bridled and the whole Man sealed to the Day of his Redemption, giving an earnest of the Eternal Inheritance, and afterward a full Possession, when our Mortal shall put on Immortality; this being the Fountain, all others that are true, flow as Rivulets from it, and so give a right Qualification for the Knowledge of Nature

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ture and Natural things; as also a Constancy of mind to work upon the one thing alone, and an Industrious hand to effect the same, here a Blessing and success may be hoped for, and those Incredible Rewards to all such as wander in the Circumference, and have never been admitted to the Center of things; but to the Vigilant hidden things, even those hid from the foundation of the World, shall be reveal'd: and that this may be the Portion of every true Laborer in Art is the sincere Desires of him, who wishes the General Prosperity of Mankind every way.

Cleidophorus Mystagogus.

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Trifertes Sagan

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Immortal Dissolvent, &c.

CHAP. I.

Concerning the mistake of those who have sought this Liquor in wrong Subjects and by wrong Ways.

IT is a Saying worthy of Observation, that the Industrious Hand makes Rich; so is it in all manner of Trades and Convers in the World; so is it in Art; but this Industry must be upon a right Foundation, and, in the Chymical Art, from a Fore-knowledge of Adæquate Causes; unto which it is impossible to attain without we are enlightened by that Wisdom, which comes from above, as a Ray from the Holy Heavens and Throne of the Divine Glory; for 'tis she, that must Conduct us in all our Labours to make them Acceptable to the Great God; well therefore might the wise Man esteem of her before Riches, and Prize Understanding above the Merchandize of Silver, Gold, and Precious Stones, because she is the true Conductor to the ways of Peace and Pleasantness; nay even to that Tree of Life, where Substance is to be Inherited: For that she opens the Door of Entrance to all Mysteries Divine and Natural; and conse-

quently without her Men grope, as it were, in the dark, even as a Blind Man does at Noon-day; for Nature God's Hand-maid was Created by him, and *Job* says, that God by his Spirit has garnish'd the Heavens, his Hand has formed the crooked Serpent; and tho' there is a Spirit in Man, yet 'tis the Inspiration of the Almighty that gives Understanding, whence we may readily Conceive, that Human Reason is too short to Comprehend the Dignity of any true Mystery without the Aid of God's Spirit.

This great Defect is too evidently apparent from the deplorable Case of the Chymical Searchers, concerning the Subject Matter of this Discourse; seeing they know not where to ground or fix their Intentions in the choice of a proper Subject, but frames each to himself a different Basis, and so make an Innumerable Number of Errors concerning the same: This Imaginary Matter, which Phantasy only has given Birth to, they defend with all the eagerness imaginable, concluding it to be the Genuine Offspring of Truth; when, alas! 'tis but a Bastard Brat of their own wandering Imaginations and ungrounded Thoughts, as in the Conclusion proves too Evident: This is an Absurdity so great, so common, that amongst the many Pretenders, I have never met with more than three that have escaped it: How then can it possibly be expected, that such should ever Arrive at the wished for Haven of Rest, when Ignorant both of the way and means by which they must come thither; for the Door of Entrance must not only be known, but also the Key which opens the same, without which they may never expect Admittance into Nature's Treasury: Therefore consequently must still remain in the horrible Mist of Errors; the most principal that have come Athwart me I shall here lay down and reckon up for Convincing of the Giddy Headed and Rash Searcher, but more Principally for the Edifying and Building up of a Son of Art.

I shall begin first with an Error, which is almost Universally received, *viz.* that Mercury Vulgar is the Foundation or Basis of this Liquor; this is an Error that the Authors of some Expositors are guilty of, which the Ignorant Searcher has not been aware of, but hath gone to work as confidently on Mercury for the obtaining of the Liquor *Alkabeft*, as others have done for the making the Mercury of the Philosophers, by several and various Preparations, as endeavouring to break its Body by Spittle, *May Dew*, Vinegar, and such like foppish Proceedings; also by Sublimation with Salts, and Distillation, and other such like Operations, endeavouring to make it run *p. deliq.* to obtain an Airy and Universal Nature and radical dissolution, even that they call the Magnetic Salt, or Foliated Earth, and Mercurial Chalybs; but all in vain; for that Mercury so prepared is still all one with common Mercury: And so likewise is that, prepared by *Regulus of Antimony*, Silver, &c. for Vulgar Mercury is unripe Fruit fallen too soon from the Tree, therefore it must return to its First Fountain, or Catholick Mercury to be dissolved its self; consequently is not the Subject of this Liquor; for the Philosophers Introduce Fire, not Water, into Mercury, to make her Medicinal, both in the Particular, and also in the General; by which 'tis brought to be for ever Irreducible to Mercury.

Another Error is in those, who seek for this Dissolvent in Dew and Rain Water, not considering, that this was designed only as Nourishment for the Vegetables, having but such a Portion of the Universal Fire in it, as might serve to dissolve the Salt Nitre of the Earth, and then the Vegetable Seed in order to a new Production; this Fire or dissolver being far remiss to that of Animals, as that of Animals is to Minerals, cannot be the Philosophers Subject of this Dissolvent, for Life would be too short to extract it.

Another Error is that many allow the Matter to be Universal, but is drawn by certain Magical Magnets at select times in the Year; but this is a grand Error, for the Matter is to be found Plentifully at all Seasons of the Year, especially in such places, as are mostly enriched by Mineral Fumes, and the manner of its Attraction is rather for the Necessity of Human Life, than any Point in Art; so that the Artist must not be too curious in endeavouring to perform that which Nature hath already done to his Hand.

Another Error is in those that seek for this Dissolvent by attracting the Air with Alkalized Salts, as Tartar, &c. not considering, that all Alkalized Salts do only attract a Saline Aquosity, which by often Cohobations may be turned wholly into an Elementary Water, whereas the true Philosopher (as already said) does by his Magnets attract a Fire, nay a Fiery Spirit stronger than any Fire in the World: 'tis true Alkalized Salts are noble Subjects, and deservedly claim Preheminency, being Contradistinct to all Acids, and therefore make a Dissolvent next to the great Liquor; but these can never be Volatized without the Universal Medium, or Philosophers Diploma, together with Essential Oyls and Vinous Spirits, and being so Volatilized, they become noble Spirits, yet do notwithstanding spend their Virtue in Dissolving Bodies, and Coagulate upon them into a Salt, retaining their Volatility; so that consequently these are excluded from being the Subject of this *Immortal Dissolvent*.

Another Error is in seeking for the Matter of this Liquor in the Animal Kingdom, *viz.* in Man; and indeed a greater in those, who assume to teach others, by their Assertions, that it is there; but having already detected such Writers (in the Preface) and also clearly shewn, that from Man, the Subject Matter of this Liquor can never be attained, altho' I know that this my Assertion does much thwart

thwart the general received Opinion, that Urine is the Basis, and that *Van Helmont*, *Philalethes*, *Starkey*, &c. have in their Writings asserted the same, so that I do Contradict the Testimony of these Worthies: Instance *Helmont*, where he speaks of the dissolution of the Stone *Ludus*, seems to Assert that it is performed by a Second drawn from Urine: And *Philalethes*, in his Treatise extant, has grounded the Basis of the *Immortal Dissolvent* on Urine and Blood; and *George Starkey* in his Treatise of this Liquor seems to ground the Basis thereof on Urine; nay, an Intimate Acquaintance of his did affirm the very Process to me, which he made use of, viz. the Urine of sound Men, unfermented, which, as soon as it was made, was by Evaporation brought to a Consistence, in order to unite the two Salts, Volatile and Fixed, and so by Distillation and Cohobation till the whole was brought over, and then being digested and deslegmed the *Alkabeest* is prepared. Dr. Bacon was, as I have been told, much of this Opinion; but all these are short of Understanding the Truth of the Subject, or of the Authors before mentioned; for it is easy to be collected from *Helmont*, *Philalethes*, &c. that they never depended upon Human Urine as the Subject of this *Immortal Dissolvent*; for then they would not have directed you to the *Chaos* of the Ancients; as the true Subject, describing it Figuratively, and Analogizing it with Man; because Man Subsists by and from the Universal Spirit, which is the true Subject of this *Dissolvent*, which they for some secret Reasons would not be so Candid to deliver: the like has *Alipili* in his Book Intituled, *Centrum Naturæ Concentratum*, which very Title shews, that it is not Man there meant, but the Universal Spirit that being the very Life and Centre of all Centers: Therefore who ever shall assert, that Man is the Basis from whence this Liquor is obtained, let him be respected of Envy or Ignorance; because there is no Subject to be drawn from Man, that will act on Minerals five hundred or

a thousand Times, and retain the same Virtue, quantity and quality, as if it had not acted at all: Therefore I regard not such Fops or such others, that dote upon highly rectified Spirit of Urine, mixed with the true Spirit of Wine, until both Coagulate into a Salt, which is Distilled and Sublimed by the Addition of fresh Spirit of Wine, until they come over in Form of a Fiery Liquor: There are others also that dote on the strong Spirit of Urine united with the Spirit of Vinegar, and Distill'd into a Neutral Spirit: but Experience the Mistress of all true Art shews that these are all greatly mistaken, and many others, too long here to Enumerate: Therefore shall pass them by, and only Insist on some few others that remain.

Those are also mistaken, that depend on Acid Spirits, as the Subject of this *Liquor*, as Nitre, Vitriol, common Salt, Salt Gem, or the Mother Liquors of any of these, or any other Salts growing in or extracted from the Earth; for all of them, none excepted, will by Distillation yield an Acid Spirit, and our Liquor being no Acid, but Contradistinct thereunto, these of Course are all to be rejected, and ought so to be in the Use of the Liquor when prepared: others, that think themselves more prudent dote much on the Spirit of Verdigrease, and more especially if it is First often dissolved in Spirit of Vinegar, and made transparently Pure, and then shot in Spirit of Wine and so Distilled, they then put as great a Price or Value on it, as in Reason can be set upon the *Immortal Dissolvent* its self; but this *Menstruum* being Published by *Zwelfer*, and long before by *Basil Valentine*, whom I take to be the right and true Author of it, and being easy to be prepared, it follows, that the Liquor *Alkabest* would be no uncommon or unknown Secret; but that remaining still as the greatest of Secrets, plainly demonstrates, that these are not the Subject, whence that is obtain'd.

They are also misled, who depend on Mineral Sul-

Sulphers, or the Vitriols of Metals or that of *Venus*, described by *Polemanus*; because there's none of these, but what are sluggish in themselves, and unactive Beings, and can't be radically open'd and separated from their Mercury's, without the *Liquors* help, and then they become Passive Medicines not an Active *Menstruum*, so of Course are to be excluded from being the Subject Matter of this *Liquor*.

Another great Mistake and grand Error is in those, that depend upon the Essential Oyls, as Wormwood, Mint, Time; or the Oyls of Gums, as Amber, Benjamin, Turpentine, and these being Chaos'd down and devoured by Corrosives, as Oyl of Vitriol, Aquafortis, and being again revived, then be coming (as they say) the *Regenerated Spirit of Wine* of the *Philosophers*; which being Distill'd from Tartar, Sal Armoniac and Mercury, each distinctly, till their Bodies are brought over, they are then the *Magi's* three Universal *Menstruums*, viz. *Minimum*, *Minus* and *Majus*: But this mistake has proved too evidently false, to the great Expence and Disappointment of many worthy Persons in this Kingdom, and indeed no better can be expected from such Heterogeneous and unnatural Mixtures, as being farther Alienated from the Universal Spirit, than some others already Named, and consequently the more remote from being the Subject of this *Liquor*.

To be short, I do on an Experimental Ground Exclude Animals, Vegetables and Minerals in all and every particular *Classis* and part thereof from being the Subject of this *Liquor*; therefore shall omit any farther Discourse of this kind and come nearer to the the Matter in Hand, which is to detect the Errors of those, who confound this *Liquor* with the Mercury of Philosophers, saying they are the same in the Subject Matter, Identity and Operation; 'tis true, the Mercury of the Philosophers is a natural Dissolvent, but it dissolves ☉ in the way of

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Generation, when as this *Circulated Salt* or *Alkabeft* dissolves it by way of separation and destruction; so that they differ in Operation, as much as Love and Wrath; the one in Love preserves, the other in Wrath destroys the Life and Motion.

There are also other Ignorant Boasters, who confound them together, yet know neither the one nor the other, yet say, they are both the same in Composition and Digestion, but near the Birth of the Royal Babe, the Matter divides its self into two distinct Parts, the one a Body Permanent, the other a Menstruous Liquor or Blood, which being Distilled is the *Alkabeft*, this shews their great Ignorance, for the same that is a Body is a Spirit, and the Blood is Homogeneous with both the *Mercury* of the *Philosophers* and *Liquor Alkabeft*; for the Mercury can never be prepared without its Aid, as being one of the three Springs; neither can the Spirit of the Body Subsist without the Blood, as every true Philosopher does, with me, know, and that at this State there is no division to be admitted, without a Death to the whole Compound; for the whole Matter in the Production of each being diversly wrought on produces the different Effect; the one is a Mercury Homogeneous, the other a Ponderous Saline Liquor and in the Production of both there are superfluous Oyls separated, which, tho' Medicinal, are not in the least Homogeneous to either; which clearly Evinces their Ignorance in the Process of Nature, which is to make Bodies Spirits, and Spirits Bodies again, and that this Menstruous Liquor or Blood is the Life which is sown in his own Womb of Mercury for the Exaltation of both; for there the Heterogeneous *Fæces* are cast off, and so 'tis qualified and united with the Spirit in order to Redeem the Body; and so is a principal Ingredient of the Stone, when as the *Alkabeft* is not: It would be too long to enumerate the vain and false Conceptions of Men concerning this Immortal Liquor, and seeing these distinctions do better become that

Chap.

Chapter, where the difference is shewn between the Liquor *Alkabeſt* and *Mercury* of *Philosophers*, I ſhall omit ſpeaking of it any farther in this, and come to ſhew the Subject of the *Difſolvent* in the next Chapter, and ſo Conclude this.

C H A P. II.

Of the true Subject Matter of this Difſolvent.

IN the former Chapter, I have laid down the Miſtakes concerning the Matter of this Immortal Difſolvent, which *Helmont* Deſcribes in the Word *Latex*, which properly Imports an hidden Source or Fountain, ſo hidden indeed, that he himſelf ſays, when this was found Religion ſtood amazed, and well may the Religious Man be ſo indeed, when their Deſcriptions are ſo Occult; for from the Word *Latex*, which in Vulgar Reception ſignifies Liquors, which may be properly conceived to be Aqueous and Spiritual, he preſently comes to tell you, that the Maſter-piece at which Art is Level'd, is to find out a Body; which may play with us in ſuch a Symphony or conſenting Harmony, by Reaſon of its exquiſit Purity, that no Corruptive Principle can find in 'it any Heterogenities by which to work in it a Diſſipation of Parts; here he immediately calls it a Body; hence we muſt for certain Conclude that this Source or Fountain, tho' liquid, does contain a Body in it, or elſe it would have been vain in him to have directed us to ſuch a Body for the Object, and that ſo Circumſpectly and diligently, as to find it by hard Labour and Induſtry, ſaying you muſt be careful, or ſedulouſly Induſtrious about finding out ſuch a Body, which by Examen and Proof is very difficult to be found, becauſe the Words import, that there is no ſuch Body in all Natural

Beings, that does Answer what this great Philosopher describes of his, therefore we must Conclude, that these Words also import Art; for that Industry is also recommended, which is as much as if he had said you must seek for the hidden Source or Fountain of Nature, and Universal Spirit, which Art must form into a Body; but this Son of Wisdom doubtless was afraid to speak after this plain blunt manner, as a Tyro does, for fear of exposing the Secret too plain; but 'tis clear, that this was the meaning, because nothing is so hidden in Nature as the Source of this Universal Fountain, and nothing in Nature has Power to reduce Bodies by Symphony or consenting Harmony but what does arise here from; for in these latter Words he also describes the Nature and Quality of the Matter to have two Faces; for that without there had been a Composition, the word Harmony needed not to have been used; so that in these Words abundance of Matter is couched in little room, every word being a full Sentence; how lightly or slightly soever the Reader may pass them over: 'Tis true *Starkey* does very Learnedly strike the Mark in his Exposition upon them, yet his Comment is so wisely Regulated as to be kept as obscure, as the Text it self; by this means and method I find, that the *Basis* of this Liquor was by this Philosopher design'd to remain a Secret to the end of time: Therefore for the Benefit of the true desirers of Art, I shall deliver the Subject Matter of this Immortal Liquor with much clearness and Candidness, yet hope, that my Stile and Words will be such, as to cloath it by such a Medium, as that it may give Light to the chosen Sons of Wisdom, yet at the same time cast a Mist before the Eyes of the Unworthy: This Method being agreeable to divine Wisdom its self; for we find, that what was a Light to the Hosts to the Children of *Israel*, was a Cloud of Darkness of that of the *Egyptians*.

These Things being Stated, I shall now come to the Consideration and Illustration of that Subject
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Matter they Point forth, viz. the hidden Fountain must be of a double Nature, or what if I should say it must be a Body of Salt appearing under two Faces, which being united makes Symphony or Consenting Harmony; the Reason of which is shewn; for then it is a Liquor of that excellent Purity, as to admit of no division of Parts; therefore as I said before, there is much of the whole Business both of Art and Labour couched in *Helmont's* Words: The Business of Nature in affording such an universal Fountain to the Artift, that is the *Basis* of the said Immortal Liquor; and the Business of Art is to know how to make it Corporal, and when so Corporified to contain two Faces, which Faces *Philalethes* figures forth by Urine and Blood; the first Face is a Body, yet nevertheless may be distilled into a Spirit, nay so Homogeneous as not to leave one Grain of fixedness or Salt behind it, which he describes to Distill over in Veins like Spirit of Wine, and speaking very great of its Active Qualities in dissolving Bodies; the Query is put, whether it is not the *Alkabeft*, the Answer is in the Negative, saying, it could not Substist without Blood, and then presently comes to the Affirmative concerning the Subject Matters of the *Alkabeft*, and says, it is Contained in Blood and Urine; these things may grabble and amuse the Thoughts of the Unwary concerning the Reallity and Possibility of these Assertions, yet nevertheless they are as clear and Perspicuous to the Eye of the Wise, as the Sun in his Lustre upon the *Meridion*; for the Universal Spirit being Concreted becomes a Mist, Vapour or Chaos, or rather an Unctious and Viscous Water, which is the true Matter of all the Ancient *Philosophers*, concerning which Chaos I have written largely in *Mercury's Caduce*, and have there shewn, that in its Womb is contained the first Essence of all Forms, yet unspecified, and so consequently it contains these two of Urine and Blood which indeed are the Urine and Blood of the great World, and not of Man; but more noble; which my Eyes have seen and my hands have handled made

Corporal ; therefore I would not have you spend your time in vain, gazing on Husks or the outside Shell of things but Press for the Kernel, or that excellent Sweetness which is placed in the Centre of Beings, which can't be extracted but by profound Meditation, and hard Labours, which must be thy Interpreters ; for 'tis not requisite, that Matters should be discover'd more plainly, it is but just and fitting that God should be the sole Dispenser of it, till the fulness of time, when according to the Promise, hidden things shall be made manifest even such as have layn hidden from the Foundation of the World : Therefore, O Son of Art ! thou must pray to God, but use the means, and put thy Hand to the Plow, not looking back ; then these Instructions will be as Fundamental Rules to begin thy Labours by to obtain this Noble Secret, which is not so much a Product of Nature but of Art : For I have in these Sheets endeavoured to clear up the Matter, so as to qualify thee with *Theory*, thence to Judge of Sophistical Authors, and the better to enable thee to withdraw thy Mind from their Entanglement, that thou mightst build upon that sure Rock, which will remain in the Storm of Tryals ; this I have done in Bowels of Love as well knowing the great Grief and Torture of Mind undergone in my unwearied Search after this Secret, even when the true Subject Matter was known ; which said Matter is also the Matter of the Grand Secret of the Antients ; but diversified into different Natures by the different Operations, and so far distinct the one from the other, that an Artist may be Master of the one, and not of the other, and therefore he that is a Compleat Master of both, is properly stiled *Adeptus Duplicatus*.

To the Truth of this my Affirmation, I have not only Experience. but also the Concurring Testimony of that renown'd Philosopher *Ludovicus de Comit.* who says that the Matter of the Liquor *Alkabeft* and *Philosophers Mercury* do both proceed from the same

same *Chaos*, but by different Operations are brought to different Effects; therefore before thou proceed to the Preparation of this Liquor, thou must learn to understand this general Matter, *Mass* or rude *Chaos*, which is the Source or Fountain of so many Mysteries; for this Liquor does not only proceed from it, but also 'tis the Wellspring of the *Mineral Life*, and while this World hath a being, will be an Inexhaustible Fountain to all those Mysteries, so hiddenly deliver'd by the Ancients; for once again I say, that not only the Stone, the great *Elixer*, but also this hidden Fire does proceed therefrom: But here you must Understand the first *Chaos*, before the *Philosophical Mercury* is produced therefrom.

Therefore a Body and not Bodies must be sought for, which being found is the Centre of the Universal Influences Concentrated, and the Blood of the said Body to be one in Essence with the Body, tho' it appears to Sight in a twofold diversity, yet distinct in Quality or Complexion, but agrees so Fundamentally, which being United by the Hand of an Artift will make the Symphony or Consenting Harmony before spoken of; for in this Case it may be said of it, as in another place is spoken of the *Mercury* of *Philosophers*, that which is above is as that which is beneath, and so *Vice Versa*; for that the Essence and Life of the Blood can't be obtain'd without the Fermentative Spirit of the Earth, or *Saturn's Urine*; neither can this Spirit of the Earth be Homogeneous and Immortal, without it extracts the Life of the Blood: *George Starkey* a Disciple of Nature does in his Treatise of the said *Liquor* in a Parabolical way deliver himself concerning these two Faces, thus, that most Acute, Subtil and Penetrating *Spirit* of Mans Urine by the help of another Medium, not of divers Ferment to its self, but Centrally one with it, must be United with an *Acid*, not *Corrosive*, *Jed Natura sua Gratissimum*; this *Acid* must be equally Volatile with the Salt of Urine before it can be Married or United

ted Intimately with it; then by often Circulations it attains that height of Purity to be Entitled *Ens Salium Summum Salium et Felicissimum*: Now that which is Centrally one with this Philosophical Urine is Blood; for the Blood is the Universal Form, as the Body is the Universal Matter, but these being United by Force is called a Violent way; for 'tis a different thing to sow Gold in his own Matrix of Universal Mercury, and so ferment it and bring it into Spirit; for then it becomes unfit for the work of Multiplication, the Seminal Virtue being then totally Destroyed and Annihilated, which is the very Matter and Cause of the Difference of the *Mercury* of *Philosophers* and *Alchemists*.

I have shewn you not only the Matter, but also the Manner and Apparition of the Matter in the Hand of the Artist; I shall now come to shew you the Nature and Internal Property of the same, when the Knowledge thereof is obtained: I say 'tis wholly of a Saline Nature, which is a middle property held up in the Arms of Nature, and is contradistinct to either *Acid* or *Alkali*, so that neither of those, as already shewn in the former, have any right to be the Matter or Foundation of this *Dissolvent*, but this Saline Quality is the Central one, so that consequently this pure Spirit hath some Garment or a Shell, by which it is Covered and in which it is hatched and brought to Maturation; and to speak plain, Candidly and Honestly 'tis a Combust Sulphur, so wholly Combust, that the Spirit being drawn from the Earth the *Faces* will burn without the least Smoak, which shews that there is neither any Mercurial or Saline part remaining; this is a Reduction of the Pure from the Impure, or a Clean from an Unclean, by the Serpents devouring himself, and then renovating into that, over which Death has no Power: Observe, he first begins by biting his own Tail, and so by Degrees devours himself, and last of all his Head, which shews that the Earth or Tail is first to be Dissolved,

solved, which then Dissolves the Head or Blood ; and that these are the two Principles spoken of by *Philalethes* is very plain ; for in Pag. 25. of his *Secrets Revealed*, he calls it the first *Ens* of Salts, saying the true *Philosophers* rejected all Salts, one Salt only excepted, which is the first *Ens* of all Salts, which dissolves all Metals, and by the same Work Coagulates *Mercury* ; but this is not done but by a Violent way and therefore that kind of Agent is again separated both entirely in its weight and Vertue from the thing it is put to : And in his Exposition upon *Ripley's* Epistle, speaking of the Separation of the *Sulphur* from the *Mercury* of Bodies, he says, 'tis perform'd by the help of a Liquor drawn from the first *Ens* of Salts ; and *Helmont* and *Starkey* say as much calling it *Ens Salium*, *Summum Salum Felicissimum*, which is the very same, that I do here assert of it : What shall I say, must I in every word Transgress the Silence of *Pythagoras* ; No : Be thankful for this, for it had never come to thy Hand, had I not made a Solemn Resolution in the time of my hard Labours, Sweats and Agony of Body and Spirit, that if ever the Almighty Being should bless me with the Knowledge of this *Liquor*, I would then deliver it so Candid, as that my Writings should be a sure Landmark to the undaunted Coaster in his Intended Voyage to the Haven of Rest ; which promise I have here fully Accomplished in shewing the Universal Source or Fountain, from whence this *Liquor* and the great Elixer doe arise, is one, so that more needs not to be said as to this Point, therefore shall Conclude this Chapter.

C H A P.

C H A P. III.

*The true Way and Manner of preparing the
Liquor Alkahest.*

THe Mistakes and also the true Matter being shewn, I shall now come to shew the true manner of the Preparation of this great *Dissolvent*, which is very difficult ; for as *Philalethes* in his Exposition on *Ripley's Gates*, Pag. 279. says. the *Liquor Alkahest* is 100 times more difficult to Prepare than the great *Elixir* ; and that upon good Ground has this worthy Author thus delivered it ; for the *Elixir* is a work of Nature, and the Mercurial Power doth Purge off the Dregs Naturally, and it is called *Elixir*, so long as it is Water, for as Count *Trevisan* says, *Azoth* is drawn out of the *Elixir*, as Oyl out of Water ; therefore as the *Elixir* is Natural, the *Liquor Alkahest* is Artificial, and as *Ludovicus de Cemir.* says, very difficult to be search'd into ; for it may be variously thought of, being Artificial ; for the Subject as it tends to Generation and Corruption in order to a more Excellent Birth, is then vile and mutable, *Proteus* like puts on all Shapes ; and what we search for must be pure and clear, and above all things Immutable ; so that here is Chymical Faith required to believe before-hand, and after sight will Astonish Reason to Contemplate it, crying out with an Holy Admiration, O Lord ! how wonderfull art thou in all thy Works.

Reader ! If you would Consider the work of Creation 'twas the very same ; for out of the rude *Mass* or *Chaos* was not only Produced the most despicable Object we behold, but also the most Glorious Creature that ever was Created, not only Paradise, but also the Transcendent Glorious Angels, so that from this the difficulties do arise, how to proceed by Art in separation of this *Chaos*, as also the

the due way and manner of Joyning due Agents and Patients by the separating of things adjoynd, for 'tis not sufficient to understand the *Aqua Vita* of the Wise, but you must also know, how to preserve it from its Compeer or Water; for being separated from the strict Tye it had in the Elements, it would rather pass over than come again to Coagulation: Again, 'tis easy to be destroyed, if you take it unripe, by the violent Fire of Separation:

These Difficulties did so Amuse and Puzzle me as to keep me back from the Possession of the said *Liquor* many Years, which Knowledge I then valued abundantly more than the Possession of great Treasures; but however blessed be God I have great Reason to say, that one Secret seldom discovers it self alone, for the Knowledge of one is a large step of Entrance into the other; for that in this Subject both of them lye, invisibly hidden, as it were, under the strong folds of a *Mineral Ens*, which the Industrious hand must labour to make Manifest; which being Effected, his time will be little enough, to Contemplate and Admire at the sight of the Operation its wonderful Effects.

Observe, in the Manifestation 'tis reduced to the smallest Atoms imaginable, through which it arises to the Eminent Dignity spoken of; for as *Helmont* and *Starkey* have it, *Ad minimos reductus Atomos in Natura possibiles; &c. dignius se Corpus non reperiens cui Nuberet*: This *Latex*, which is Vile and Contemptible, is advanced to the transcendent height of Purity and Perfection, which Words, says the Latter, are soon said, but not so soon understood, and hardest of all to be done; which is the Reason of the many difficulties mentioned in this Chapter, concerning its Preparation.

'Tis true, this Operation is in few Words taught by *Paracelsus*, where he says in his Treatise, *De viribus Membrorum Cap. de Hepate*, The Process of the *Alkabeft* is (*Ut a Coagulatione sua resolvatur, ac deinde Coaguletur in Formam transmutatam, sicut Processus*

Coagulandi et Resolvendi docet, &c.) Which short Process is the greatest Light that acute *Philosopher* gives concerning this Mystery; no marvel then if the Doctrine of its Preparation remains so obscure in the World; for *Starkey* allows, that *Helmom's* Doctrine is equally as obscure, as that of *Paracelsus*, and I say that *Starkey's* is as obscure as either of them, and indeed that of *Ludovicus de Comit.* not much clearer; for that of *Solution* and *Intervening Coagulation* is the greatest Light, that any of the *Philosophers* have given concerning the Preparation of this *Liquor*; for there is this Reason of such an Obscuration, the Process by them given is General, and common and alike to most or all Chimycal Magisteries; but more especially to the two Grand Arcana's, viz. the *Liquor Alkabeſt* and the *Philosophers Elixer*.

But the manner of *Solution* and *Coagulation* is quite different, the one is Natural, as already said, the other Artificial, and therefore very difficult, because it is not easily searched out, and that it may be variously conceived of; but that which has been hitherto known and demonstrated by all true Artists is *Solution* and *Coagulation*; we shall a little consider the difference and manner of this *Solution* in both these Magisteries.

The Dissolution requisite in order to obtain the *Alkabeſt* is a dissolving of the Body into a Spirit that will never Coagulate into a Body again, but the Dissolution in order obtain the *Mercury of Philosophers* is a Dissolution, wherein the Essence of the Body is so Congealed, as to become a Ferment to the *Mercury*, to Congeal upon the Body again; for as the Worthy *Treviſan* says concerning the Preparation of the *Mercury of Philosophers*, the same Matter must abide that the same Form may follow, and that nothing is to be added to it, nor taken from it, but a Superfluous Flegm and red Earth; for when Bodies are to be Renovated it must be done by things in kind; therefore *Treviſan* makes it a great Error to alter *Mercury* from

from its Metallic Species; we may ground, that the Great Work is performed by a dissolution of the Body and Congelation of the Spirit, but the work of the Circulated Salt is a *Solution* into Secondary Principles, but not into Elements; for nothing of Profit can be expected from thence, yet this *Solution* ought not to be into every distinct Principle, but into one Saline *Liquor*, *Homogeneous* and *Immortal*. Here this Body of two Faces, or that of old *Saturn's* Urine and the Blood of the Great World are reduced to one, and that you may know it when so reduced, it is a Fire, yet in form of Water; 'tis an Air, yet Condensed; 'tis no Corrosive, yet the most sharp and perpetual Corrosive; 'tis not Medicinal yet the Crown of all true Medicine, being a Cleanser and Purifier in Nature, a Destroyer and Conqueror of Bodies; 'tis call'd the Fire of Hell, because the Spirit that comes from the Centre is United to the Blood without the Intermediation of the Heavenly Rays of *Mercury*, yet Acts with that Purity, as that it finds no Body more noble than its self to joyn withal, therefore is not Commiscible with any Ferment, and so not capable of Transmutation.

These Things being considered I shall now come to give you a short Scheme of what *Helmont* says concerning this *Liquor*, the first is what the Artist desires, and is Comprehended in these Words, Art is Solicitous in finding out a Body, which may play with us in such a Symphony or consenting Harmony by reason of its exquisit Purity, that no Corruptive Principle can find in it any Heterogenities, by which to work in it a Dissipation of Parts: This is the Sum of what the Artist would attain, and is the Chief of all which can be by Art sought for. The Second is, what Art by Industry doth find, Comprehended in these Words, Religion then stood amazed, the *Latex* being found, which being reduced to the smallest Atoms possible in Nature despises the Wedlock of every Ferment, in vain there-

fore is its Transmutation sought for, not finding a Body more worthy than its self whereunto it may be joyned. The Third discovers the Anomaly of this Production, in these Words; But the Art or Labour of Philosophy hath brought forth an Anomalous Product in Nature, which took its being without Mixture of any Ferment, divers or Heterogeneous to its self and the fourth contains a short Adumbration of the Process, the Serpent bit himself, revived from the Poyson into a pure Essence, over which Death hath no Power. All which to a Son of Wisdom I have with much Candidness already explained; but for the benefit of *Tyro's* I shall now come to give a farther Illustration by way of Mecanic Demonstration.

If Art will from the *Latex* obtain a Body, it must be begun with Coagulation, and with such Magnetical Earth, as Attracts the Cœlestial Raies and Universal Spirit, and Concentrates them in the Centre, for that in the Centre the pure Parts of the Starry Fire is digested, and in the Centre all the Influences meet, and from the Centre does the living Ferch proceed; for 'tis the Central *Archæus* that Sublimes the Mineral Vapour or those pure Spirits that are of a dissolving Nature; this is the Body which Art is Industrious about and desirous to know, even the Body of the Universal Salt and Sulphur of the great World; for in the Mecanical Demonstration from thence proceeds such a Spirit which in all Nature has not its Compeer; but before 'tis brought to that Harmony, as to admit of no Dissipation of parts, it must have time to mature, and to form to its self some pure Garments or a Compleat Coagulation, which is done by Successive Animations, so as to bring the Spirit of the Earth to permanency before it is taken out of its Nest, and that is done by successive Retrogradations, or repeated Coagulations to bring this Transverse Work of the Earth the nearer to its purity, for then only it is, that it admits no dissipation of Parts.

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The Body being found and thus purified, and its Spirit produced from the small Invisible Putrified Atoms of the same doth cause a Religious Astonishment; that from so dry a Body as the Earth should proceed the Central *Latex* or the most hidden Rivulet of the great Ocean its self, nothing in the World being so pure it despises to Contract Wedlock with every speciflicated Form whatsoever, and so its Transmutation is impossible, and indeed the oftner this Universal Spirit passes through the Entrals of the Elements, the greater is its Purity and the fitter for Action; for on the other hand Matter could not Subsist, but by the continual additional Rays of its Universality; therefore, Reader, Retain thy Amusement for a time, and thou shalt hear the Philosophical Trumpet calling thee to behold a wonderful rarity, even the *Indian Brachman's* Famous Water Works, Contradistinct to all others, as it is a well compacted Body of Fire burning in Water, and in full Lustre and not extinguished; for in the Decoction the Blood and Urine is Centrally one, but in the Coagulation they appear under two Faces; *Philaltes* says as much, speaking of the next Matter of the *Alkabeft*, says 'tis a Salt and the Fire surrounds the Salt, and the Water swallows up the Fire, and yet overcomes it not, and so is made the Philosophers Fire, of which they speak, the Vulgar burn with Fire, and we with Water: it being so transcendently pure then scorns to be joyned with any Compeer, so admits of no Wedlock.

Herein Consists the Excellency of this *Liquor* that Art and Labour conspire together to produce this *Ens* or being without any mixture of any ferment Diverse or Heterogeneous to its self; for indeed its Composition is wholly from Universal Principles, or Virgin Elements, and Invisible ones too, for the Earth and the Water of this Fountain is as Invisible to the Eye of the Vulgar as the Fire and Air, but being made Manifest to the Artist do Conspire together to bring forth one *Anomalous* Birth;

Birth; therefore be assured, from these Words this Great *Philosopher* would point forth, that this *Liquor* is not Compounded of two things of different Natures, for then it would be Subject to Death, but of one thing alone even the most Universal Salt of Nature, which is divided into two, and returns to one again, so consequently is one in Nature and Essence.

But now the Adumbration of the Process doth also shew the Universality and Uncompoundedness of this *Ens*, it is represented by a Serpent biting himself and reviving from the Poyson into a pure Essence, over which Death has no Power; observe the Antient *Egyptians* always by a Serpent understood this Universal Spirit; because of the Subtilty of its Parts, and that Creature of all others is the most Subtil, and therefore well may it figure forth by the holding its Tail in its Mouth Natures Circulation from one Universal Element to another, till all the Elementary Qualities are unbanded, and the pure Essence of all extracted, which moves upon an Immortal Hinge and therefore will admit of no Diffipation of Parts or Evaporation of Moisture; for as it is Homogene, 'tis of an equal Volatility, and being the Cœlestial Fire made Terrestrial by its own Power can't be destroy'd by any specified Body whatever, therefore well might *Helmont* say, as there is but one Fire in the World, so there is but one *Liquor*, none other partaking in Quality with it, as the *Adepti* do know and can testifie: Which *Liquor* is that which will, *Sampson* like, make sport for the Artist, and do more than ever the Lords of the *Philistines* could have expected from him, plucking down and destroying as he did not Houses, but the most Compact and Solid Bodies of Minerals, and like a Valiant Conqueror maintains his Ground against all opposing Enemies: but few are the Kings, Lords or Nobles, that have been so happy to see the Battle fought by this *Anomalous* Combatant, not only for the Reasons afore
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render'd, but also for the tediousness of the Preparation, which we shall now come to speak of and so Conclude this Chapter.

As to the time of preparing this *Liquor* 'tis long and tedious, which *Helmont* also Complains of, but *Starkey* explains this to be more upon the Account of the Stink in the first Preparation, than of the tediousness or length of time; for he Limits it to a few certain Days, which I know is impossible to be Effectuated, unless he begins to Calculate from the time that the Body is ripe and fit to be broke by Violence, and to be distill'd over into a Spirit, then to Unite the Blood or other Face may be accomplish'd in his time: But for my part I do comprehend from *Helmont* what Experience shews, *viz.* that the time is long and tedious, and attended with many difficulties, which *Helmont* also knew; or else he would not a Complain'd so much for the loss of his Bottle; Crying out, O that I had removed my Receiver; from whence we may readily Conceive, that he suffered Loss: *Ludovicus de Comitibus* puts the Question beyond doubt concerning the tediousness of the time where speaks of the Reduction and Retrogradation saying, it can't be perform'd by common Labour; but requires both Art and Time, which, he says, is long and therefore whoever thinks to obtain it by Violence and in a short time shall find himself much deceived, for he can never bring it to any final Complement, and consequently will never be able to know what Vertue 'tis Impower'd withal, even that Fiery and Vital one; for that it is destroyed by force by his Compeer, which *Helmont* and *Starkey* do allow, but tell not what that Compeer is; but that excellent Son of Art *Ludovicus* aforesaid, says 'tis Water, therefore I'll attribute to him the Praise, his Writings giving me the first Light of discovery, what this Compeer was

O Reader, thou must of necessity allow that it is a time of Tediousness as well as difficulty to Concentrate the Benignant Spirit of the World, to
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make such a strong Sulphureous and Saline *Liquor* of it, as will dissolve the hardest Metals, even those, that oppose Common Fire, are by this *Liquor* radically open'd, it being as we may call it, the very Essence of the Elements Heavenly and Earthly; and what *Typifies* the Fire of the last Judgment, which is permanent over the Elements in a Quintessential Nature, so that the Degrees of its purity are not to be wonder'd at; the Artist hath great Cause to Bless and Praise the Lord his God, who hath made him an Instrument to produce a clean thing out of an unclean, which that Good Man *Job* so much Question'd saying, who can bring a Clean thing out of an Unclean, surely none but God alone; so that we see the best of Men speak but according to that Knowledge, which the Almighty thinks fit to reveal unto them; for he disposes of Knowledge as of Rivers, communicating it for the use of all: Therefore *Paul's* Advice was Sound and Candid, *Judge not Ignorantly of things thou understandest not*: For indeed if we look upon the thing aright 'tis properly the Work of God; for as *Trevisan* says concerning the Exaltation of the Work in the great Elixir, 'tis done *Christi Gratia*, Importing that Man can't alter the ordain'd Course of Nature, but as an Instrument in the Hand of God stands still to see a mighty deliverance; but we are speaking of that where Art must lend her help, because Nature is alter'd from her usual Course, and a Clean thing is also requir'd; but this is a Talent not Committed to every one's Trust.

Now this clean thing can never be Produced but by a Radical Union of the foresaid Principles, not only by a bare Association or Apposition of Parts, so that the same may be said of this, as is of that Union of *Sulphur* and *Mercury* in the Great Work, viz. they can never more be separated, neither in Love nor Woe, this Radicall Union is as Principally required in this *Liquor*, as it is in *Azoth*, which is a Volatile Tender Spirit for Whitening *Laton*: Now this being separated from

many Heterogenities hath no Eminent smell, but is a Ponderous, subtil *Liquor*, which will not still over but in a considerable Degree of Heat in Sand, viz. the third Degree, and admits of its Flegm to be distill'd off first, as other Ponderous Spirits do: *Philalethes* speaking of the Substance and Preparation of this *Liquor* delivers himself thus; 'Tis a Noble Circulated Salt prepared with wonderful Art, till it answers the desires of an Ingenious Artist; yet 'tis not any Corporeal Salt made liquid by a bare Solution, but is a Saline Spirit, which Heat cannot Coagulate by evaporation of the Moisture, but is of a Spiritual Uniform Substance, Volatile; which in a gentle Heat will Distil over, leaving nothing behind; that is to be understood in a Requisit Heat of Sand; so is there an Exaltation made far above what Nature was ever able to perform.

Thus I have deliver'd the difficulties and also touched at the Fire and given you the right way of its Preparation from Point to Point, I have declared the Truth without Defect or Ambiguity of Words; and have as formerly mention'd, shewed you that no strange Ferments are used, the Principles being Centrally contain'd in the Original *Chaos*, which being separated and brought again to an Indissoluble Union, is, the Serpents devouring his own Tail and so renovating into that, upon which Death can have no Power: but this cannot be perform'd, but by the help of Fires of divers sorts, Convenient Vessels, fit Furnaces and Glasses, and a considerable time to boot, without all which it will be impossible for the Artist to obtain his desired end, being as I have deliver'd, much easier to know the Matter, than to find out the true manner of its Preparation, which is chiefly and principally to be sought for at the Hand of the Almighty; these are Secrets which belong to the Divine Treasury, and therefore the Aid or free leave of the Triune Power must be implored, to open the Door

of Entrance, which may otherwise for ever remain shut to thee.

Yet I have not been wanting in these Sheets to Communicate my Experience, and Candidly to shew the Preparation of this Immortal *Liquor*, so far as was lawful for me without exposing it to the Hands of debauched Persons and Impostors, and he that can't gather it from what is here delivered will scarcely obtain it from the Voluminous Circumlocutions of other Writers; who have so Intermixt the Preparation and intangled it with the *Philosophical Mercury*, that the Artist stands in need of *Ariadne's* Clew to lead him out of that Labyrinth; in which Maze that the Ingenious may be no longer bewildred, I shall in the following Chapter distinctly and clearly discover the difference between the *Liquor Alkabest* and *Mercury* of the *Philosophers*.

CHAP.

C. H. A. P. IV.

The Difference between this Liquor and the Mercury of the Philosophers.

THE Labour of the Candid and honest hearted is to untie those difficult Knots, which the envious have always been endeavouring to tye, and to bring the Industrious out of that Labyrinth, where they have been entangled and bewildred, so as to loose the Right Path, and for this end I am willing to lend my Hand to conduct the searcher through this Wood where many an honest hearted and laborious Man I am well satisfied have lost their Way, as not being able to distinguish the different Path of the *Liquor Alkabeft* and *Mercury of Philosophers*, designing this Chapter as a Plain and knowing Pilot in this Case.

I hope that nothing but Ignorance it self will question the Verity of what I have here deliver'd concerning the Foundation of the *Alkabeft* and *Mercury of Philosophers* to be one, seeing I have on my side not only Experience, but also the Testimony of worthy Sons of Art, that they do both proceed from the first *Chaos*, before Art hath undertaken to work upon it: But here the difference comes, one is prepared in a way agreable to Nature, the other Artificial; and consequently really divested from the Generative Power, being drawn beyond the Predestination of its Natural Seed; the exact Example of which may be seen in a Grain of Wheat, when 'tis sown in its proper Matrix, in order to Multiplication by Generation; or when it is Artificially Prepared and Fermented, and so drawn into Spirit, in which Work the Seminal and Generative Virtue is wholly destroyed: For here there is made an Artificial Solution of the Seed not into Elements but Secondary Principles; and by this violent way

of Dissolution 'tis wholly divested of its Metallic Seed, and Consequently made unfit for the Act of Generation, as was shewed just now in the Example of the Grain of Wheat : So by consequence must bring a considerable difference at their Respective Ends.

Yet nevertheless both these as they arise from one Universal Fountain there may be some likeness in them and for this Reason the Description does in some Sence resemble both the one and the other, that few have been able to distinguish the true difference, and the more by the shifting Speeches of Writers, who confound the one with the other, that so the Artift may be easily entangl'd, because they have not so much as differenced them in Name, Nature or Operation ; for *Van Helmont* says, that the *Liquor Alkabeft* dissolves every Visible and Tangible Matter into the first *Ess*, preserving its Power, which Words preserving its Power is also attributed to the *Mercury of Philosophers* ; other *Philosophers* say, 'tis a fiery Water, and Lightsom, and *Turba Philos.* and *Senior* say, our Water is a Fire, and stronger than any Fire for it reduces the Body of Gold into a meer Spirit, which the Common Fire could never be able to do ; the like also says *Artaphius* ; the very same thing is by others attributed to the *Alkabeft* : *Helmont* says that as there is but one Fire in the World, so there is but one *Liquor* in the World, no other partaking in Quality with it ; and *Geber* says, the most high hath given us the Knowledge of this Water, which lights the Candle gives Light to Houses and yields abundance of Riches : It would be too tedious to enumerate the Parallels of this kind concerning the *Alkabeft* and *Mercury of Philosophers* ; so that 'tis very difficult for the unskilful and unwary to distinguish their true difference, which is mostly to be Comprehended from those Words, where 'tis said, the one is a work of Nature, the other of Art ; so are they different in appearance, for as a late Author says,
that

that I may prevent a Common Error, viz. the confounding our Natural *Dissolvent* with our Circulated Salt or *Alkabeft*, some Ignorant Boasters who neither know the one, nor the other, having taught that they are both the same, I shall so far shew the Difference, that no *Tyro* but may effectually distinguish them in his Theory. Know therefore, and Note well this short distinction, there is no Affinity between them either in Matter or Operation: They differ in Matter, as much as one Species doth from another, the one being *Metalline*, the other *Saline*: They differ in their Operations, as much as Love and Wrath; the one in Love Preserving, the other in Wrath Destroying, Life and Motion.

This Author by his good leave speaks right in the Operation, but strains the String too far concerning the Matter, as too many Reformers do, and so cause Errors on the other Hand, equal to those they would Reform, thereby making many to grope for the Door of Entrance, or middle way, which leads directly to the Path of Truth: For be sure as they proceed from one Matter, both Universal, there is something of Assimilation in them; for as much as they are both performed by way of Solution and Coagulation, both tedious and difficult in searching out; and the Subject Matter so far exalted from its former State, as that it becomes a Work of Wonder; and for certain they must have something of likeness, or else those Artists were very Ignorant, who gave them one Denomination, calling them by the like Name, as Fiery Water and Watry Fire, Immortal and Homogeneous Essences, *Alkabeft*, which is all Ghost or Spirit, the first *Ess* of Salts, and have attributed Supernatural Vertue to both; and from these and such like Universal Terms and Names, 'tis very easy for the Searcher to be deceived.

Wherefore I shall now come to give you a clear and general Account, wherein they agree, and wherein they disagree, and then shew you the Reason,

son, why they are thus described, then give you the true and proper signification of the word *Alkabeſt*, and why *Helmont* gave the *Liquor* this Name; for I have taken ſome pains after the Inquiry thereof, ſo that I am able to render a Satisfactory Reason.

First of all I ſhall Inſtance in ſome particulars, wherein they agree: Firſt, the *Mercury* of the *Philophers*: and this Circulated Salt agrees, in that they are both Universal, one for the Graduation and Exaltation of Metals, the other for Diſſolving all Bodies: Secondly, They agree in this, that as one preſerves the Seed in order to Multiplication by Generation, ſo the other preſerves the *Craſis* and *Medicinal* Vertue of Species in order to healing; for in the Diſſolution it admits of Nothing to fly away in Fume: Thirdly, They agree in this, the one is the Emblem of Man's Regeneration and eternal Salvation, the other of Man's Diſſolution and Deſtruction; for in the Preparation they are both to be ſeen: Fourthly, They both agree in the Penetration of Bodies; the one enters to the very Central Life of them in order to the Multiplication, the other pierces to their very Centre in order to their Separation and Division; for it ſeparates between their Central Mercury and Sulphur: Fifthly, They agree in the Matter and Manner of Preparation, as to the Matter they both Proceed from the firſt *Ens* of Salts, and as to the manner, 'tis by Solution and Intervening Coagulation, till brought to an exalted Perfection: Sixthly and Laſtly, They agree in that they are both made from the Universal *Chaos*, as alſo in the manner of their Composition, for the *Mercury* of the *Philophers* is Compounded of Sulphur and Mercury; but the *Liquor Alkabeſt* of Salt and Fire and Blood; and both brought to ſuch an Indiffoluble Bond of Love and Unity, as never to be ſeparated either in Love or Wo; both Homogeneous and Immortal, and both Universal Diſſolvents: Having ſhewn wherein they agree, I ſhall now come to ſpeak of that wherein they diſagree.

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First, They differ in this, whereas the Work of the Philosophers *Mercury* is purely Natural, so the Process of the *Immortal Dissolvent* is meerly Artificial: For as in this Work the Sulphur or Gold is exalted to the highest Pitch, and Degree of Perfection so in the preparation of the great *Hilech* of *Paracelsus*, it is reduced from a Natural to a Contranatural State. Secondly, They disagree in this, where the *Mercury* of the Philosophers is an Homogeneous Metallic *Ens* Co. essential in all its parts, true *Mercury*, of a middle Substance clear like pure Silver, being bright Cœlestial and Shining, and not so Essential to any thing as Gold, it being its Universal Mother does radically congeal upon it; therefore as *Treviſan* says, no Menstruum is profitable in the Philosophic Work, but that which dissolves the Body in a Generative way, and then recongels upon the Body dissolved, so the Philosophers Solution of the Body is a Congelation of the Spirit; and upon this Account they have rejected all those Solutions, as Sophistical, where the *Dissolvent* and Dissolved remain not Permanent together: Whereas the *Alkabest* or *Sal Circularum* is a Saline Liquor, and therefore by *Paracelsus* sometimes called the Liquor of Salts and doth Dissolve Bodies, but remains not with them, being as easy separable from them, as the Spirit of Sulphur is from Oyl. Thirdly, There is a Disagreement between the *Mercury* of the Philosophers and Liquor *Alkabest* in the manner of their Operation and Action on Bodies, for the *Mercury* dissolves Gold and all Precious Stones and Pearls by way of Generation, and Exaltation, for the Life and Vertue is Multiplied, and they may be reduced to their first Form in greater Vertue and Beauty, and of more Value to the Metallurgist and Jeweller, but the Liquor *Alkabest* dissolves not only Gold, but also all the other Metals, by way of Destruction, so that the Generative Virtue is defaced and wholly obliterated, and in this Reduction into their first Matter it gives a certain Testimony of their

their Diversity, as Metals into *Sulphur* and *Mercury*, Stones into a Saline *Liquor*, and Pearles into a Milky Juice. Fourthly, They disagree in this, the *Mercury* of *Philosophers* at the end of its Preparation will become fixt and Permanent abiding all the fiery Tryals, in form of a Calx, yet as fusible as Wax Penetrating *Mercury*, and other Volatile Bodies before their Flight and fixes them; whereas the *Liquor Alkabeft* at its respective end of Preparation is a Ponderous Saline *Liquor* in form of Water, which will moisten the Hand and every thing else, and as it is wholly Saline and Volatile 'twill not endure the Fire, but will remain in its form Distilling over in a Saline *Liquor*, being altogether Incapable of Coagulation, and by that means dissolves all fixt Bodies whatsoever, not into Elements but into more simple Parts. Fifthly, Their Difference consists in this, whereas the *Mercury* of *Philosophers* is made by a remiss Fire of Generation, even the Aereal Life and Lunar Fire being the Medium in perfecting it by gentle Decoction from Point to Point, which Regimen of the Fire has been carefully hid by all Artists, in that 'tis called the Vessel of Nature, or Mercurial Vessel, *Pondus Naturæ*: Whereas the *Liquor Alkabeft* is made by the most violent Fire of separation, for the Spirit is by Violence not only Distill'd from the Earth in Fiery form; but that is United to the Blood, which produces that Hellish Fire that brings all Imperfect Metals to a greater Imperfectness, though notwithstanding it makes them the more Powerful and Efficacious for the expelling and rooting out of Diseases and Infirmities; for being brought to their first *Ens* they dissolve and circulate with our Juices, as being then thin and Spirituous, and so perform that in the curing Diseases, which in their hard and gross Natures could never be expected from them. Sixthly and Lastly, The *Philosophers Mercury* and *Liquor Alkabeft* differ in this, the one may be brought to an Universal Medicine, the other has

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no Medicinal Vertues in't: For as *Philaletbes* says, this *Mercury* thus renovate or new born, may by the *Philosopher* be diversly handled; for he may take it from the Fire, and Circulate and Cohobate this *Mercury* by a Peculiar Operation, which is partly Mechanical, till he have a most admirable, pure, subtil Spirit, in which he may dissolve Pearls and all Gems, and Multiply them or his Red Stone, before it be united with a Metal in Projection, for the making of *Aurum Potabile*: And in this *Mercury*, thus Circulated, is doubtless the Mystery of the never fading Light, which I have actually seen, but yet not Practically made. In a word, every one who hath this exuberate *Mercury*, hath indeed at Command the subject of Wonders, which he may imploy himself in many ways, both admirably and pleasantly. And certainly, he that hath this, needs no Information from another; himself now standing in the Center, he may easily view the Circumference, and then Operation will be, next the Spirit of God the best Guide: So that the *Mercury* of *Philosophers*, being brought to fixity, may be made an Universal Medicine, for the Curing all Diseases, and Renovating and Restoring to Youthful strength and Vigour; whereas the *Liquor Alkabeft*, be it never so highly multiplied or Exalted, cannot properly be said to be a Medicine, but a Menstruum, which is a Proper help or Medium to prepare Medicines by, and in it self still remains unchangeable, being as *Starkey* says, endued with these Qualities; viz. 'Tis a Ponderous *Liquor*, being indeed all Salt, without any Watry Flegm; it is all Volatile being wholly a Spirit, without any Corporeity left in it, of no eminent Odour, for all things which send out an odour considerable, are for the most part of a very Volatile Nature, or consist of many Heterogenities. It is not therefore Volatile after the manner of Spirit of Wine, Urine, or the like, which fly with the smallest degree of heat, but (like unto

a ponderous Spirit, which yeilds its Flegm in the first place) this when it hath dissolved any Vegetable Concrete, and made it Volatile, will suffer the same by a gentle heat of *Balneum Mariae*, to be all separated from its self, &c.

From what has been here said, concerning the Agreement and Disagreement of these two, I hope, the diligent Inquirer after Art will receive good satisfaction, and for the future be freed from those doubts and Errors, which might before occasion much Trouble and Perplexity of mind : This was the end I proposed to my self, throughout the whole of my discourse ; this therefore may suffice as to this Point ; I shall now proceed to speak of the Proper Names of this Dissolvent.

But by the way (Reader) observe, that the Invention of this *Liquor*, in these Parts of the World is owing to *Paracelsus* ; thus *Philalethes*, and also adds, that among the *Moors* and *Arabians*, it hath been, and is at this day, commonly known to the Acuter sort of Chymists, then consequently we must depend, that *Paracelsus* did give the most significant and Proper Names to it, and 'tis plain from *Helmont's* own Writings, that he diligently Studied and Traced his Works, and at length through Labour came to understand them, and amongst other things, obtained the Knowledge of such a dissolving Menstruum, as *Paracelsus* often writes of ; and seeing this *Liquor* to contain an homogeneous Nature, spiritually acting, and after almost innumerable Actions still remaining the same, (Spirits being immortal) and this *Liquor* proving so, he therefore not improperly called it *Alkabeft* ; altho', as I shall shew by and by, this Name doth more properly belong to the *Mercury* of *Philosophers*, and that, this was the design of *Paracelsus* in it ; however by the way, I shall examine the derivation or Root, of this Word, which is from

from the *Belgic* or rather *Highb Dutch* Language ; in *Holland* or *Flanders*, where *Van Helmont* lived, [*Geest*] is as much as to say in *English* [*Spirit*] and in the *German* Tongue, 'tis much higher and Gut-tural, being express'd [*Alchabeß*,] which signifies [*All Spirits* or *all Spiritual*;] which Word [*Alchabeß*] *Paracelsus* makes mention of in the Tenth Book of his *Archidoxes*. Chap. 6th. where treating of the Virtue of the Members, says that the Liquor *Alchabeß*, has a great power of Conserving and Comforting the Liver, and consequently of Preserving it from the *Dropsie*, and all such as arise from the defect of the Liver, and if the Liver is dissolved or broken, it stands in the Place of a new Liver : The Process thereof is this, it must be resolved from its Coagulated state, and Coagulated again into a Transmuted Form, as the Process, of Coagulation and Dissolution Teaches. This Passage is the only Place, wherein *Paracelsus* has made use of this Name, it being not to be found elsewhere in all his Writings, so that 'tis plain to us, that *Helmont* has borrowed this Name from him, therefore we must according to Reason and Experience consider, whether *Paracelsus* meant this *Liquor* or not ; because the Process set down, *vizt.* Solution and Coagulation is alike and Common, (as hath been already touched at,) not only to the Preparation of both these *Arcanums* but likewise to most Chymical Magisteries.

Now the Liver is the Fountain of the Blood, and is the seat of Life next the heart, the Blood being there Prepared for a further Elaboration and Purification, in order to give the Body, its Nourishment for the Production of Seed, and Consequently for the maintaining of Life, &c. And 'tis plain by experience; that this *Liquor* will by greater length of time, dissolve all mixt Beings by its Active, Thin, Spirituous Penetrative, Dissolving and Homogeneous Nature, in a Natu-

ral degree of Heat equal to that of the Liver, and separate them into their distinct Substances, suffering not any thing to fly away in Air or Fume; so that to me here arises the difficulty to think, how this should work that different Effect, of healing and restoring the Liver, and not rather dissolve it, as it does other mixt beings: The doubt is beyond my reason at present to give an Answer to, and I suppose will so remain for ever, for I do not so much as once intend to an Experiment, to try its Virtues in this Case; having, besides what is already offered, two Substantial Reasons against it; the First is, that this *Liquor* being difficult to be prepared, would be too costly to be administered by way of Medicine; for a Reasonable Practise would soon diminish a considerable Quantity, so that this great Treasure would in little time, be exhausted and come to nothing, if given by way of Medicine, whereas 'tis perpetual by way of Menstruum: The Second is, that the *Philosophers* give no directions for the Exhibition of the White Stone inwardly, but in *Epilepsies* and *Palsies*, and other Diseases of the Brain, which is under the dominion of the Moon, much less its White Oyl but for Externals, as *Leprosies*, *Scabs*, *Virulent Ulcers*, *Fistula's*, *Cancers*, *Noli me tangere*, and the like; how they should then dare to exhibit a Spirit so Active and Fiery, yet much more Crude than these, I know not; neither indeed can I be made to believe, that ever *Helmont* or any other of the *Adepts*, did ever once so much as make use of it by way of Medicine, and Consequently could not be this *Liquor*, which *Paracelsus* meant, where he speaks of the Cure of the Liver, but rather of the Grand *Elixer*.

But 'tis abundantly more probable, that they served themselves therewith in the Preparations, of Drugs and all kind of species, in order to bring them to Magisteries, Arcana's, Essences, and Quintessences

tessences, which have a superlative Vertue, especially from the Metalline and Mineral Kingdom; because what is resolved by it retains their healing Faculty; so from these Considerations I can't Conceive that *Paracelsus*, where he speaks of the Restoring of the Liver, that he meant the *Circulatum minus* or this *Liquor*, so that 'tis altogether undemonstrable, that this single Dissolving Menstruum should be a safe and good Medicine, and Consequently should Cure the *Dropsie* as is easy to be gathered from the foregoing Words of *Paracelsus*, that his *Alkabeft* really was Medicinal; for he expressly says, if the Liver were broken or destroyed, it would be in place of a new Liver; now from the foregoing Considerations, this *Liquor* can't be said to be a safe and good Medicine, 'tis therefore abundantly more probable that *Paracelsus* by the Word *Alkabeft* meant the great *Elixer*, that being all Spirits, a Quintessence, divested of all the Elements, and consequently of all Earthly and Corporal Qualities; for if the Grand *Elixer* were not Spiritual 'twould never Transmute; for by this Spiritual Act, it works three Effects, first Penetration and Dilatation; secondly by Fermentation and Contraction; thirdly by the Acts of the two former, the combustible *Sulphurs* are separated, the pure ones manifested with additional Tincture and Permanency so *Helmont* finding his dissolving Menstruum Spiritual might easily mistake the Words of *Paracelsus*, and call it *Alkabeft*, and indeed the Name is no ways Improper, altho' not used for this *Liquor* by *Paracelsus*, unless *Paracelsus* was guilty of speaking one thing and meaning another, as *Helmont* himself sometimes is; as I can prove from these following Words. The *Liquor Alkabeft* (says he) Reduces all sensible and Tangible Bodies into their first matter, Preserving the Power of their Seed; which as you have all along heard it doth not, but their Medicinal Vertue; the Property of Preserving the seed belongs
 to

to *Azoth* or *Philosophical Mercury*; So that if he were not guilty here, he was for certain beside the matter; but I am apt to believe he was, seeing he has not in all his Writings given account of the Medicinal Vertue of his *Alchabest*, as *Paracelsus* does of his.

From hence it may be clearly Conceived, what I have inserted in my former Doctrine, that the *Philosophers* were many of them guilty of interweaving these secrets together, and calling them, by one Name, for 'tis clear, that *Helmont* called this dissolving Menstruum the Liquor *Alchabest*, yet says it preserves the seminal Vertue, when as *Paracelsus* by this Passage meant the Grand *Elixer*; and the more evident in this, in that he has given other Names to this dissolving Menstruum, and those mostly used by him are the great *Hilech* and *Sal Circulatum*; for these are generally to be traced through his Writings, and 'tis easy to be discern'd, that he puts a great distinction between this dissolving Liquor and the Mercury of *Philosophers*; for the Liquor, he calls *Circulatum Minus*, and Mercury of *Philosophers* *Circulatum Majus* as is plainly to be Proved from the Process given, where he saith, thou must extract the first *Ens* of Mercury by Spirit of Wine, and it will come over in a Liquid substance which (says he) is called by the *Philosophers* a most sharp Metalline *Acetum*, and by us in our *Archidoxes Circulatum Majus*. *Archidox Lib. 10. Chap. the 4th.*

This Distinction and Process cannot be rightly understood by any, but an *Adeptus Duplicatus* for to the obtaining of this Spirit of Wine the Work is one, and is Performed by the concurring help of an Assistant; otherwise 'twill be impossible to be obtained but being gotten, the difference Consists in the Forcible way of dissolving the Body and the Natural by the Spirit of Wine, to extract the first

Ens

Ess of Mercury, in which the Blood is united and Cleanfed, and so brought to the gentle or Benignant Fire of Nature, which is one with Central salt Nitre and also the Magical Sol; for it unites to the Center with a wonderful Fermentative Power: Now this Spirit of Mercury or Mercurial Fire and Oyl, is by *Artephius* not improperly called the Vinegar of Mountains, and by *Paracelsus* the most sharp Metalline *Acetum*; for it performs that which common Fire could never do, vizt. dissolves the Body in Preservation of the Form, and brings it to a Spirit, to be exalted aloft in the Air, where Cœlestial Purity, and the strengthening Multiplicative Vertue is; that Spirit, will again return to and unite with the Body, which Circulation is continued till the Universal Mercury, has extracted the universal Sulphur, and then is it truly and properly called the *Circulatum Majus*, or *Alchabeft*, as thou pleasest, the Name being proper to the *Elixer* it self, as may be plainly discerned from the foregoing Passage of the said Author, where he tells you, that when it has overcome its Like, it becomes a Medicine for the Liver, excelling all other Medicines; and towards the end Adds, Verily should the Liver it self be broken or dissolved yet this stands in the place of the whole Liver, no otherwise than if it had never been broken or dissolved as aforehinted: So that the Medicine (from the Authors own Words,) by which the Liver is Cured is no other than Mercury Prepared, Sublimed, Vivified into a new Life; and having passed the gates of Death comes to be united into a twofold Life, Terrestrial and Cœlestial, and so becomes that Medicinal Tincture, which is a true Emblem of Man's Spiritual Restoration, and is in a far higher degree of Perfection than this Circulated Salt can be conceived to be; seeing it may be so highly exalted, as to be brought to an *Elixer* of Spirits, which in a Minute

nute penetrates the Center of Bodies, being a Perfect Concatination of an Incombustible fire and light, which will admit of an endless Multiplication, being each time advanced in Vertue, Power and Spirituality ; so that it becomes a Medicine not only for Man, but also for Metals, making them both Perfect and Permanent, the which this wrathful *Liquor* cannot perform.

For this great Magistery hath in it the Exalted Vertue and Universality of Light, a Quintessence or Medicine of the highest Purity in the three Kingdoms of Nature, Animal, Vegetable or Mineral; therefore may be properly said to be a Medicine for the Liver, this being a Member or Part; which so much Concerns the Life of man : Now this will manifest it self here a Medicine above all Medicines in order to restore firm Sanity : And that it may be yet more plainly conceived, that *Paracelsus* spoke concerning the *Philosophers Tincture*, I will quote the Words of the famous *Arabian Prince Geber* in his 4th Book Chap. 11. There is a Medicine (says he) of a twofold Nature of the third order, yet but one in Essence and manner of working (afterwards cunningly adding) there is notwithstanding an Addition of a Citrine Colour'd Sulphur, which is perfected by a most clean substance of fixed Sulphur : Behold how its like is overcome after the first Preparation This plainly shews that the like, which is to be overcome, is the very same, that *Paracelsus* spoke of, as I have experimental Reason to believe : This from the Testimony of *Dornæus* and *Ludovicus de Comit.* is also confirmed to be that of the great *Elixer*.

Concerning its Spirituality, I shall add a Passage or two more for the greater Confirmation of of what is here said : *Basil Valentine*, (in his last Will and Testament and Allegorical Expressions

(Pag.

(Pag. 347.) between the Holy Trinity and the *Philosophers Stone*,) Compares his *Mercury* to God the Father, as being a Spiritual Body; and the *Philosophers Sulphur* or Gold to God the Son, who is God and Man, which *Sulphur* must dye and rise again for its Brothers and Sisters sake, being then a glorious Body, redeeming and Tinging them to Eternal Life: and when these two come together saith he, they are called *Mercury Duplicate*; from whence proceeds our third Substance, which is our Glorified and fixed *Sol*, the *Philosophers stone*, or Spiritual Essence of the *Philosophers*, called the Triune Stone, proceeding from Two, Water and Spirit, Animal and Vegetible in the *Mercury* and the Mineral living Sulphur of *Sol*, which are Three, Two, and yet but One. Now observe, this Authors *Mercury Duplicate* is the same [Like,] with that of Geber and Paracelsus, which the *Mercury* will overcome, and then it becomes the Medicine or *Alchabest* spoken of.

Thus having given you some Account and Reason, of the Names imposed by Authors on this *Liquor*, I shall now come to give you some Reason for our Additional Name, viz. *Trifertes Sagani*, which is as Proper a Name, for this *Liquor*, as any given by the *Adepts*, it being Spirits born in and Predominant over the fire, nay it inhabits the fire, even that fire that hath Power to dissolve the four Elements and Reduce them to its own Nature of Universality. Now this *Liquor* being thus Prepared is a Compleat Key to the Medicinal Art, and doth open the Treasury of Medicines in the three Kingdoms of Nature, in a way succedeanous to nothing but the great *Elixer*.

But seeing the use of this *Liquor* is manifold and various and will require a whole Chapter, I shall omit speaking of it here and refer you to the next; where its vertues are fully shewn; and come a little to

consider the Exercise of a laborious Searcher, which he meets withal in his Search: The first Exercise is to come to the knowledge of a true Subject Matter which is very difficult: for the *Philosophers* Words concerning it are so obscure and hidden, and the Matter Involved in such *Tropes* and *Metaphors*, that it requires a more than ordinary help to come to a right understanding to distinguish rightly and truly and genuinely what the Matter is, which beyond all Control is candidly done in these Sheets.

The second Difficulty that the Labourer meets withal, is to distinguish between true Books and those which are false and Sophistically Written, which indeed is a Labyrinth, equally as difficult as the former concerning the Matter; For a false Author is like a wrong Guide upon a Journey, for if in the beginning of the same, He goes but a few steps in a wrong Path, and then follows the same, may in the Conclusion be led clear contrary to his designed end; and indeed it is of greater Consequence in search, because there is few or none to be met with in all our Course, that can direct to the right way: Now there is in Scripture a Curse pronounced on all those, who put the Blind out of his way, which Curse will take hold on all those Sophistical Writers, in that there is no Blindness greater than the Spiritual Blindness, whether in things Natural or Divine, and therefore 'tis a very great difficulty to distinguish them asunder, which being done the false are to be found as much as the Devil himself, who is the Author of all Imposture.

A Third Difficulty is after you distinguish Authors, to come to some knowledge and Understanding of the true, concerning the Scope and Intention of their Writing, both as to Theory and Practice; which indeed is a Difficulty surmounting the former, former for these Reasons:

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The first is their Circumlocutions and large Descriptions of things when as indeed it may be comprehended in little Compass; the second is their Multiplicity of Repetitions of one and the same thing, only with some variation of Words, only to amuse the Reader: The third is by such voluminous Writings they have the more room and Liberty to Confound their Operations, speaking of one thing where they ought to speak of another; by which Preposterous manner of Writing the Searcher can't fail of being bewildred; this is not a Fault about the Operations only, but also about the time of the Operation, which causes Abundance of difficult Thoughts in the Operator, and makes him many times think those things concerning Time, which are neither Probable in Nature, nor possible for Art to perform: For what is to be gathered from the most concurring Writings of them all is, that the Matter can't pass the first Dissolution in less than five Month and the riper and higher Matters are carried, the sooner and shorter will an Operation be, for in Conclusion it may be brought to the Work of a Months, then of a Week, and lastly of a day, which Operations being misplaced cause this Error; for there is great difference between that Operation, where there is ripe ferment and that where there is not; for 'tis very difficult to bring bread to rise without Yeast.

Now the last and most Principal difficulty of all is, the want of Substance or Money of your own to carry on your search and Labours; for tho' you have never so much Knowledge and have overcome all the other difficulties, yet without money to build Furnaces, buy Glasses and Convenient vessels, and Coals, you can't go forward with your Operations; I make no doubt but this was the state of the *Cleine Boer*, and of that Worthy and famous Count *Bernard Earl of Irevisan*, to detain him three years from the Possession of the Magistery after

he had the true Knowledge of it, and 't hath been the Case of many a Worthy Artift, I am fure it hath been very often mine, which is the moft difficult and deplorable Case of all, having a large Family and their fubfifting while you are in fearch, for it requires the whole man, and fo takes him from all other bufinefs, and if he makes a Friend, he is obtain'd with the greateft of all difficulties; for you muft firft difcover your Subject; fecondly your Operations; Thirdly the Time, as to the two former, let him be never fo ignorant, he muft be the Judge, and if he does not like it, you then loofe both your Friend and your Art to boot; and indeed tis very difficult when a man goes about fuch a thing to know who is Qualified for it, or what ufe he will make of it when obtained: And as to the time, he is very nice in it, if he do except of your Propofals, and to have an Operation performed to every *Punctilio*; and if it is not you muft expect Reprimands, and fometimes the lofs of your Friend; who, lying as it were, on a Bed of eafe, little knows the hardship, Fatigues, Labors, Loffes and Difappointment, which the Artift fuftaines and is fubject to; neither indeed dares he to open the fame for fear left they fhould become his Enemies; thefe things being rightly Conſider'd may be reafon fufficient to deterr many a Worthy Labourer from his Search, to the great lofs and Detriment of Art: That none of thefe, or fuch like difficulties may bethy Portion, O Reader! is the defire of him, who fhall Conclude this Chapter with his Well-wifhes to every Sincere Searcher after Art.

C H A P. V.

The Use of the Liquor Alkahest, Circulatum Minus or great Hilech of Helmont and Paracelsus.

IN this Chapter, I shall come to shew you the Use of the *Circulatum minus, Liqour Alkabest, or Sal Circulatum* of *Helmont* and *Paracelsus* in dissolving Universally all sublunary Concretes into their first Matter, none excepted, for nothing opposes it, but its Compeer or Water, and the Central heart, of *Mercury*; the one destroys, it, and the other remains untouch'd by its Activity; for all other Beings are so Essentially dissolved, as that they may be brought over the Helm, in their true Essences; nay by Cohobation they may be reduced to an Elementary Water; therefore for the good and Benefit of Mankind, I could be heartily glad that the excellency and Utility of this Menstruum, were better known, since *Helmont, Paracelsus* and *Starkey*, put such Noble Encomiums on it: for as the first of these says, In Nature there is but one Fire, which is our consuming *Vulcan*, none other partaking in Virtue and Quality with it, all the true *Adepti* have an undeniable Proof of, which indeed is far more powerful than any Common Fire, for what will remain there, as unconquerable, is by this *Liquor* destroyed and Altered radically and fundamentally; the Mechanical Practice with it is thus.

Let this *Liquor* or Fire be distilled from any Metal soft and Imperfect, and it doth at first or second time leave them in a fusible Substance like Wax, of which

which the Sulphur or Tincture is dissolvable in the best Spirit of Wine, and from the residue (being kept three days in a vaporating heat) Mercury quick and running may be separated, the same may be done in harder Metals, yea, in Perfect Metals, in a longer time, by oftner reiterated Cohobations.

But this Fire being once distilled from Mercury Vulgar, it leaves it Coagulated and Fixed, so that it will endure the Test of Saturn: It's left spongi-ous like to a Pumice-stone but heavy like *Turbith Minerale*, brittle and therefore without difficulty Pulverisable, which then Cohobated with Water, distilled from Whites of Eggs it causes that distilled Water to stink, but becomes of the Colour of the best Coral, whence its denominated *Arcanum Coralinum*.

This Fire if it be distilled from any Gem or Stone subtilly Pulverised, it turns into a meer Salt of equal Weight to the Gem or Stone; Pearls it resolves into a Milk, which is their first *Ens*; so also Crabs Eyes (as they are Vulgarly called, being otherwise no Eyes, but Stones found in the head of the Crab,) and all Vegetable Stones, as Peach-stones, Date-stones, or the like.

In a Word, this Fire or *Liquor* resolves all Vegetables, Animals and Minerals, into their first *Ens*, and in such Concretes as Contain in them Heterogenities, it doth discover and sever (that it makes separable) the same.

But observe, this dissolution is not perform'd like that, which is made with the Mercury of Philosophers for that dissolves Bodies by way of Generation, but this, by way of Destruction, in that it separates between the Central Mercury, and Sulphur of Bodies, and altho' they are very prevalent as to Medicines

cines, yet are they totally bereaved and divested from any generative Power; so that 'twill be in vain for any to expect, Generation therefrom, seeing the *Liquor* it self is prepared by the way of Wrath; and so it dissolves Bodies; therefore called *Ignis Gehennæ*, the Fire of Hell; but the Medicines prepared by it surpassing others, I shall give you some Particular Examples of it, first of such, as are of an Inferior Rank, as to Preparation, and then of those more difficult and Noble.

Now for small Experiments and for the more ready use of the *Alchabest*, 'tis good to provide your self of Convenient Vessels, as small as Egg-glasses, thick and strong, with short Necks, wide mouths, and Ground stoppers exactly fitted; also small Retorts with Ground stoppers, which may serve both for digestion and Distillation; but for great Experiments and larger quantities I advise you to use my hard Metal Jugs made fizable with very long Necks, well tryed which is by putting them into a Pail or Tub of Water within two Inches up to the mouth then blow your Breath, if there be any Air hole, the Water will Bubble, then not fit for use: These serve for Digestion, Dissolution, and also Distillation, because you may work them either standing upright, or lying down, as your occasion shall require; being thus provided with Vessels you may begin your Solutions first on Vegetables; Which it does Resolve into their first liquid Matter, distinguishing in them all the Heterogenities by several Colours, and distinct places, one above another; in which Resolution there always seats it self in a Distinct place a small Liquor, Eminently distinguishable from the rest in Colour, in which the Crasis of the whole Hearb, Tree or Seed, doth reside: in which Retrogradation of the Concrete, by this way of Dissolution, there is no less of Virtue, but an Exalting of the same by many degrees, only whatever virulency is in the Crude Concrete,

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by this Operation is wholly extinct, with a Preservation notwithstanding of all the specifick Virtue, appertaining to the Concrete in its simplicity.

And furthermore 'tis to be observed, you may dissolve all Herbs into their Principles, liquid without Sediment, of which part will be unctious and fat, especially in Trees, Gums, Seeds and many Roots; and part Aqueous in which the *Volatile Salt* of the Concrete will appear to the tast, the Liquor with its own Oyl you may Circulate into an Essential Salt, which is indeed the first *Ens* of the Concrete; but if you would have things done in a lesser time, make your Dissolutions in a stronger heat, and distill over your *Liquor* with the dissolved Body in a due fire, so will the *Oyliness* be wholly turned into a Saline Spirit, which in a distillation by Bath will come over in various Colours the Crasis seperating it self from the Flegme (both by Colour, Tast and Smell, as also by its Time of Coming over the Helm distinguishable) and your *Liquor* left behind at bottom, as much in quantity, and as Effectual in virtue, as before; as for example, This Work does happily succeed with Bawm, or any other vegetable which is better dry than Green) which being only Macerated some hours in a gentle warmth, you will see it so dissolved in such a wonderful manner, that you cannot sufficiently admire the Effect; the *Alkabeft* being separated from it (or brought over according to the former direction) out of Bawm you have a Noble Cordial for the heart: and thus out of Helebores you may obtain a Noble specifick against the Gout, *Hypocondriack Melancholy*, *Calentures* and *Deliria's* in Fevers: out of *Colocymbida* an excellent *Febrifuge*; and out of Cedar an *Ens* for long life: For which take the Wood Cedar ℥iiij of the Dissolvent an equal Proportion and digest twenty four Hours, and it will be wholly dissolved

ved in the Conservation of even the very same odour, the *Liquor* being separated, it will freely dissolve in Spirit of Wine, or if you first dissolve them in Spirit of Wine, the *Liquor* will dissolve with it; digest and draw off the Spirit of Wine, and then you may distil off the *Alkabeft* with the Essence of the Concrete, and separate them, as you have been directed: Observe the Dissolution of this for long Life, must be in a gentle heat like that of the Sun in the Spring and after that digested in a like heat till the Oyl and Water be united into an Essential Salt: I should advise all Vegetables to be prepared in the like Nature, if you desire, to have their Eminent Vertue without losing those peculiar Excellencies, which depend on the *Vita ultima* of the Concrete, otherwise a speedier Preparation makes the Medicine no less Effectual for Curing Diseases, tho' less powerful as to long Life: out of Myrrh, Aloes and Safron, an Excellent Antihectical Medicine, as also against *Lypothymy's*, *Deliquia's*, *Convulsions* and *Palsies*. Thus much for Vegetables, I shall now give you a short Survey of Stones, Pearl and Coral, and lastly of Minerals: Tho' I must confess by the way, that if your *Liquor* does radically dissolve a charcoal, it is as certain a sign, that it is true, as if it did dissolve Gold it self; for according to *Helmont*, the Work succeeds well upon Charcoal; but 'tis admirable to see how the Operations will be changed and varied according to the Degree of Fire, and diuturnity of digestion.

Take of the Stone *Ludus*, in Subtil Powder, and of the Dissolvent *ana*, Q. V, digest twenty four hours then distil, and 'twill be converted wholly into a Salt, which being Calcined will in a cold Moist Air easily run *p. deliq*: which will certainly Cure the *Stone* with all its Attendants.

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Take of Pearl, what quantity you please ; and of the *Liquor*, equal Proportion, which being therein Immersed, 'twill dissolve into a Mucilage (a gentle Maceration of some hours preceding) Resolvable in Spirits of Wine. The same may be done on Crabs Eyes, but sooner : 'Tis an excellent Medicine, for comforting the heart, giving strength to the very Marrow and Bones : Coral so dissolved is a Medicine that restores sense to those bereaved of it, Comforts the Brain, Memory and Heart, expelling sadness and Melancholly, and making a chearful and healthy Constitution.

Observe with this *Liquor* you must use no acid Spirit, or Salt, or Corrosive of what sort soever. For wherever such things are used, as Mediums whether for *Mercury*, or any other, they must be well washed off and made sweet before the *Alkalhest* is put on ; therefore in Sulphur fine Flowers are the best : Of these take what quantity you please, of *Liquor* Equal Proportion Digest for the space of two days, and afterwards Cohobate twice or thrice. they will come over the Helm in form of a very Red Oyl, seperable from the *Liquor* by a separating Glass : Excellent in the *Consumption*, *Coughs*, and the like ; tis not only a Preservative of Man's body but also of Beer Wines and other Liquors.

If you Abstract this *Liquor* from the Calx of Lead, twenty four hours digestion being premised ; you will have the Lead so Referated unlocked or opened, as that in Spirit of Wine, 'twill easily let go its Sanguineous and sweet Tincture : which is the Magistery of Lead, and an Excellent Medicine for all burnings and Inflammations whatsoever.

Take

Take of the Flowers of Antimony, sublimed with *Sal Armoniack* and dulcified, or of the *Alcohol* of Antimony, which is better, one Ounce of the *Liquor Alkabeſt* three Ounces, put them into a Retort, and digeſt ſix hours, at furtheſt then ſtill off the Diſſolvent, and you will have a true Medicine, which Infallibly Cures the *Dropsy*.

Take of Precipitate very well edulcorated, made after what manner you pleaſe, one Ounce, of the Diſſolvent two Ounces, and having been digeſted 24 hours Diſtil, and you'll have a fix'd Precipitate, working by ſtool, ſweat and Urine, a certain Remedy for the *Leproſy*, *ſcurvy*, *Kings-Evil*, *Gout* and *Pox*.

Take of the Calx of Gold one Ounce, of the *Liquor* two Ounces; digeſt in a Viol with a long Neck (or one of the Egg-glaſſes, before deſcribed which is better) for three days, or until it will give forth no more Tincture; then pour off all that is diſſolved into a Retort, and with a gentle Fire draw off the *Liquor*, and you'll find the Gold diſſolved in the Bottom of the Retort, which you may either diſſolve in Spirit of Wine, or let run in the Air *p. deliq*; and you have a true *Aurum Potabile*: The ſame Proceſs is to be obſerved in Silver,

Another; Take Gold Calcined into fine Atoms, or Laminated into thin Leaves, one Ounce, of the *Liquor Alkabeſt* three Ounces put them into a Retort with a ground ſtopper, and let them remain in the heat of a gentle Bath a few daies, or until the Gold be diſſolved without Sediment, the *Liquor* then being diſtilled from it, leaves it in the form of a Salt fuſible which Cohobated often with the *Liquor*, is made Volatile, and comes over in two *Liquors*, White and Red; the Red is the *Femaline Tincture*, and the White may be

reduced into a White Mercurial Body, after the dissolving *Liquor* is separated from the same: Thus Gold the King of Metals, of Nature most fixed in Corrosives, Test and Coppel enduring all kind of Martyrdomes without the least diminution, even the most exquisite Tryal of *Vulcan*, is by this *Liquor* or Fire, wholly mastered and Conquered so as to be brought into its Mineral *Ens*, which is the highest Preparation of Gold, that can be made by means of this *Liquor*, being its Fifth Essence, and is of Power to cure the most deplorable Diseases, to which the Nature of Man is subject; but the Magistery of Gold, which is the first Preparation of it, by means of this *Liquor*, is a most eminent Medicine against all Malignant Feavers, the Pestilence, Palsies, the Plague &c. In the like manner you Prepare the Fifth Essence of Silver; but this following Medicine, is equal if not superior to either.

The Sweet Oyl of Venus Take of the best *Danzick* or *Roman Vitriol*, and Calcine it till it be thoroughly wasted in the Fire what will wast; then dulcifie the *Colcothar* with distilled Rain Water, and dry it very well, to the *Vitriol* thus prepared, add of the Fire or *Liquor*, equal Parts for it will be dissolved easily and Friendly, distil off your *Liquor*, and pour it back again; and thus Cohobate it at the least 12 or 15 times, so will all the Body of the *Colcothar* be brought over the Helm. in form of a Green Liquor; digest this same in the gentle heat of a Bath, for about a Month and then distil it in a slow Fire, so will the whole calcine substance of the *Venus*, come over, leaving the Liquor below in the Retort, in its intire Pondus and Virtue: To this Liquor or Spirit put an equal quantity of *sal Armoniack*, dissolved in as much Water as will dissolve it, so shall you separate the Green Liquor from a White Sediment, which White Sediment, will give a
White

White Metal, as fixed as Silver and will abide the Test of *Saturn*; but yet formally distinct from Silver which thou (if a Philosopher) shalt easily perceive however as good to a Metalurgist as the best Silver; the green Liquor dry up in a Viol Glass, by evaporating all the Moisture, for its the Sulphur of *Venus*, mixed with the *sal Armoniack*, by which (Note that) it is fixed so that it will abide all Fire, this Sulphur extract with the most pure Spirit of Wine, which will dissolve it, leaving the *sal Armoniack*; distil away then from it (thus dissolved) your Spirit of Wine, and you have left a very fragrant green Oyl of *Venus*, which is its Sulphur Essencified, by these Operations, as sweet to tast as the best Honey, than which Nature hath not a more Sovereign Remedy for most (not to say all) Diseases: this is the true *Nepenthe* of *Philosophers*, causing certain Rest, and asswaging all Paines, but ever after sleep leaving the Party either sensibly amended (in more violent and diuturnal Diseases) or quite well in the less rigid Maladies: Thus also from *Lapis Hematidis* and *Spelter* may be had Noble Medicaments, also from the Sulphur of Antimony, and more especially from Common *Mercury*; for if you Cohobate the *Liquor* so long till its body is brought over and proceed in all things as in the Sulphur of *Venus*, you have a Medicine that will effect whatever can be desired by either Patient or Doctor.

Thus having given you a short Landskip (as it were) of this Liquor, I shall here pass it by at present, and Conclude.

FINIS.

... Metal as fixed as silver and will abide the
... of time, but yet formerly almost from silver
... (in a Philosophical) this is only perceptive
... as good as the silver as the silver
... the green liquor having in a Vial made by eye
... rising all the moisture, for the liquor of
... mixed with the (in the water) by which
... (the clear) is fixed so that it will abide all
... this sulphur cannot with the most pure
... of Wine, which will abide it leaving the
... (the water) still away from it (the
... your spirit of Wine, and you have left
... very pleasant (the Oil of Rose) which is its
... (the Oil) by these Oils, which is twice
... as the (the water) than which (the water) has
... a more (the water) in the most (not to
... all) Diseases: this is the true (the
... causing certain heat, and allowing all
... but over the heat leaving the body enter
... (the water) in more violent and dangerous
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... also (the water) and (the water) may
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... (the water) for it (the water) the (the water)
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... (the water) of (the water) (the water) you have
... (the water) which (the water) can be desired
... (the water) (the water)

... having given you a short (the water) (as it
... of this (the water) shall (the water) be at
... and (the water)

THE END

